



The Eurocouncil of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile
European Bureau

PRESS RELEASE

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FIA Concerned by European Commission Approach to Mega Trucks

The European Commission has published last week a reviewed version of the study undertaken by its Joint Research Centre examining the opportunities of modifying the Directive 96/53/EC defining the maximum authorised dimensions and weights of lorries in international traffic. The study considers, in particular, the introduction of vehicle combinations potentially measuring up to 25.25 meters and weighing up to 60 tonnes (so-called “giga liners” or “mega trucks”).

Among the main benefits claimed for these considerably larger and heavier vehicle combinations are the decreased costs for goods’ transport due to the potential efficiency that they would allow. Other claimed benefits include a higher overall energy efficiency and a lower burden on the road infrastructure. There are also claimed improvements in road safety and environmental performance to be derived from putting these vehicle combinations on the road.

While in general welcoming measures that optimise and relieve road freight transport, the FIA Eurocouncil expresses its concerns regarding a potential modification of the Directive 96/53/EC that would allow widespread use of mega-trucks on Europe’s roads.

The FIA believes that – based on the actual information, the numerous field trials and research studies carried-out in several European countries – the disadvantages related to a relaxing of the currently allowed dimensions and weights for lorries far outweigh the advantages. These disadvantages include increased risks for road safety, higher potential damages to road infrastructure and an even greater modal shift to goods transport by road.

Relaxing the permissible weight and length of the lorries would conflict with the efforts done to improve safety on European roads. “The commissioned research doesn’t consider the consequence of the interaction of mega-trucks with vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians” stressed Olivier Lenz, Director of Mobility of the FIA European Bureau addressing experts gathered at a European Commission stakeholders meeting last Wednesday.

“The European Commission should take seriously the concerns raised by several field studies showing the risk of severe damages done to the infrastructure, in particular tunnels and bridges” added Lenz. “Considering that European road infrastructure already suffers from severe and chronic under-investment, additional damages to the road network would have a further negative impact for the mobility of Europe’s citizens.”

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Note to the editors

The report undertaken by its Joint Research Centre on the initiative of the European Commission seeks to analyse the implications of allowing the use of longer and heavier vehicles for road freight transport. The study considers the introduction of vehicle combinations measuring up to 25.25 metres and weighing up to 60 tonnes, encompassing the whole of the European Union transport system. Such vehicle combinations are already in circulation in Finland and Sweden. At the same time several Member States carry out field trials.

The Eurocouncil of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the leading motoring and touring organisation in Europe, represents via its 71 national motoring and touring organisations in 47 European countries some 35 million European motorists. Europe's motoring and touring organisations have as their highest priority to put their members' interests at the centre of Europe's mobility policy in order to make mobility more sustainable, i.e. more reliable, cleaner and safer while keeping it affordable for all.

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